

3 Give an Offering to God

Bible Verse:

Proverbs 3:9

Extra Bible Verse:

2 Corinthians 9:7

Provide:

- 1 quarter for each group of 15 children

Purpose:

Children can understand that God expects them to give money to the church. Children can examine ways the church uses their money to minister to others.

Bible Material:

The Widow's Gift (Luke 21:1-4)

Warm-up

Get-involved Activity
(10 minutes)

Play "Coin, Coin, Who's Got the Coin." As the children arrive, place them in circles of about 15 children. Put one person in the middle of the circle and one person on the outside. After you give instructions to the rest of the group, show those two what to do. Tell everyone to put his hands together with palms facing each other—fingers flat, not woven—and hold them together loosely. Demonstrate the hand position to the children as you describe it.

Explain that the person in the middle is *It*. *It* will hold her hands the same way but will have a quarter hidden between her hands. *It* will walk around and pass her hands over everyone else's hands. *It* will drop the quarter in one person's hands. Everyone will pretend that they have the coin to try to fool the person on the outside of the circle. Meanwhile, the person standing outside the circle watches and tries to notice when *It* passes the coin to another player. Once *It* brushes her hands over the last person's hands, *It* goes back to stand in the middle of the circle.

The person outside the circle gets three chances to guess who has the coin. If he guesses right, he becomes *It*. The former *It* chooses who will stand outside the circle to guess; then she moves into the circle. If the person on the outside does not guess correctly, *It* stays in the middle and passes the coin again. Play until it is time to start WORKOUT.

Provide:

- Farming clothes such as: overalls, bandanna, straw hat, work boots, and plaid shirt
- Poster board
- Marker
- Masking tape

To Do:

- Enlist 2 adult actors.
- Photocopy the script and give it to the actors.
- Lay the clothes out on the floor where the children will sit. Be sure they are oversized so “Suit” can put them on over a business suit.
- Make a poster of today’s Bible verse and tape it to a wall.

Provide:

- 5 Bible costumes
- Half-sheets of poster board
- Markers
- Bible
- Pennies
- Small paper sacks
- Aluminum container

To Do:

- Prepare 5 costumes for the characters. Use the pattern on the next page to make your own, or collect suitable bathrobes and fabric strips.

Workout

Group Study
(30 minutes)

1. Discuss the Bible verse. Ask the children to sit down quickly. Motion for the actor to enter.

Suit: *(Dressed in a nice business suit, he stands up at the front and looks around for farming clothes. He calls out to the children.)* “Do you see any farming clothes? Oh, I see some over there. Would you please pass them to me?” *(He puts the farming clothes on over his suit. When he is almost finished, a coach asks him a question.)*

Coach: Excuse me, sir. What are you doing?

Suit: Well, I have decided to become a farmer.

Coach: Oh, do you not like your job any more?

Suit: Oh yes, I like it fine.

Coach: Then why are you changing jobs?

Suit: Because I read that verse on the wall over there. It says, *(read the Proverbs 3:9 poster)*. I do not have any crops, so I thought I’d better grow some.

Coach: Oh, no, that’s not what this verse means. Proverbs was written when people had to farm because they did not have big grocery stores as we do today. Almost everyone farmed then. God wanted them to give to the church so their ministers could eat. It is OK if you do not grow crops.

This verse means that God does not want you to act selfishly. He wants you to give some of your money and your talents to help others. Just as God wanted the farmers to give from the first part of the crops, you are to give first to God from what you receive. Do not wait until the end to see if you have any money left to give.

Let’s look at the verse again. *(Turn to the children.)* Why don’t you read along with us?

Ask the children: “Does this verse mean we all have to be farmers? What does this verse mean?” After they answer, read it aloud together again.

2. Dramatize the Bible story. Teach the children the Bible story, using a type of pantomime and response team. Ask five children and one coach to volunteer to help you with the story. Three children will act like rich people. One will act like a poor widow. Explain that the volunteers only act out the part as you read. The fifth child plays the part of Jesus sitting quietly in the back of the temple. The sixth child has an extra assignment: to read Luke 21:3-4 aloud.

Assign the rich people in order. Tell them they will act like showoffs as they pretend to give an offering to the Lord. Emphasize to them, “The most important thing is to act out what you hear me say.”

See the margin for a very simple, quick pattern for a biblical costume. Dress the three rich people flamboyantly; the widow in humble, dull clothes with a dark veil to cover her face; and Jesus in a moderate costume, between the rich and the poor.

The coach will hold up signs for the response team (the children not acting out parts). Give him the poster and ask him to stand beside you as you read. When the coach sees “OOOOH!” in the script, he is to hold up that sign. When he sees “AAHHH!” he is to hold up that sign. Tell the children who are listening (the response team) to watch the signs and read together the sign the coach is holding up. Let the coach practice with the children before you present the story.

Give an Offering to God

Jesus is teaching in the temple. He says to watch out for people who like to brag and act important. A person who acts this way shows that his heart is not in the right place. When Jesus finishes talking, He sits close to the offering boxes. He watches the people as they drop their money in the offering box.

One of the persons who is ready to give an offering looks like a wealthy person. He has a bag full of money to give. He makes lots of noise dropping all the coins into the offering box. He wants people to realize he is rich. (“OOOOH!”)

The next person looks even richer than the first. She walks slowly to the offering box. She wants everyone to see her two bags of money. (“OOOOH!”) She drops twice as many coins as the first person. She wants everyone to know how generous she is, which they can see and hear plainly.

I guess today is *rich person* day. The next person who walks to the offering box is even richer than the first two. He is carrying three bags of coins for the offering. (“OOOOH!”) He wants people to know he is the richest and most generous person in town. (“OOOOH!”)

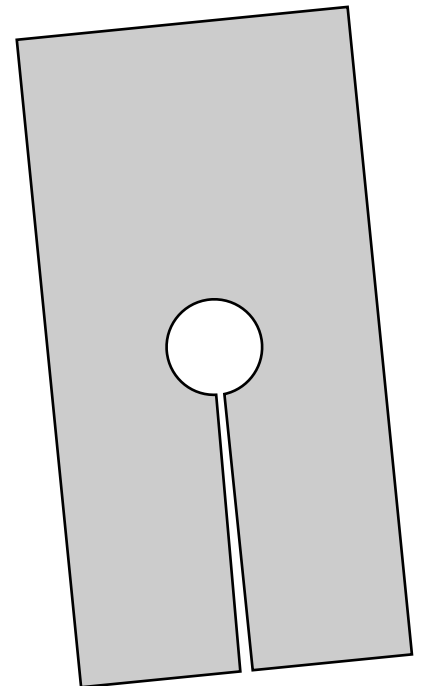
Now there seems to be a different type of person walking toward the offering box. This poor woman is a widow. Her husband has died, and she has almost no money—only two copper coins. She looks shy and embarrassed as she walks toward the offering box, but she wants to give her money because she knows it is right to give to the Lord. So quietly and slowly, hoping no one will notice her, she puts all she has into the offering box. Then she goes back to sit again and pray.

Jesus is sitting there watching it all. He says, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth. She gave out of her poverty and put in all she had to live on.” (*Let the child playing Jesus read this part.*)

(“AAHHH!”) Jesus knows that this woman trusts God enough to give Him all she has.

—Based on Luke 21:1-4

- Divide pennies and place them in the bags as indicated below:
Rich person 1—1 bag
Rich person 2—2 bags
Rich person 3— 3 bags
- On 1 side of the poster print *OOOOH!* On the other side print *AAHHH!*
- Enlist volunteers: 5 children and 1 coach.
- Photocopy the script and give it to the coach and the child playing Jesus.
- Place the aluminum container where actors can drop the pennies.



Provide:

- Photocopies of your church's budget (optional)

To Do:

- Research how your church spends money.

Provide:

- 1 plastic bag per child
- 10 pennies in each bag per child

To Do:

- Ask a coach to help you collect pennies from the children who volunteer to give them.

3. Explain what churches do with money. Say: "The Bible makes it clear that you are to give money to your church. The Bible calls it the *tithe*. That means you are to give ten percent of the money you earn to the church. You may hear that you are giving money to God. Actually, you are giving money so people can find out about Jesus and His love for them. That is what God wants you to do with your tithe."

Before the meeting, find out some things your church does with tithes. Inform the children how their tithe money is spent to minister to other people—everything from overseas missions to electric bills to street people to gospel tracts. You might even make photocopies of your church's budget to point out things the children would recognize.

Ask, "Who remembers the Bible verse?" Pick one or two children to say the verse. Clarify that it pleases God for children to give their money to the church so people can learn about God.

4. Demonstrate tithing. Give each child a bag of pennies. Say: "In your bag you have 10 pennies. Let's say you earned them by helping around your house. Now you have 10 pennies and God has none. If you were going to tithe, you would give God one-tenth of what you earned. One-tenth of ten pennies is one penny. So God asks you to give Him only one of your pennies. You may keep nine pennies for yourself. If you want to give one penny to God, pass it to Coach _____. She will bring it to me, and we will see how many pennies God would receive."

Count the pennies and tell the children the total. Ask them to name things that can be bought with that amount of money. Then ask the coaches to give the pennies back to the children. Some children will not have given a penny to start with, but it will not take long to find out who already has ten pennies. Tell the children, "When you come back in for COOL DOWN, we will have candy for sale. You will be able to use your pennies to buy some candy."

5. Pray together. Say a prayer similar to the following: "Thank you, God, for providing for the people who love You and belong to You. Teach each boy and girl here how important the tithe is and help them remember to tithe when they earn money."

6. Prepare for stretching. Divide the group into smaller groups for STRETCHING and encourage the children and their coaches to begin work immediately.

Stretching

Activity Page Time
(20 minutes)

Answers for activity pages are found on the last page of this meeting. You may choose to provide photocopies of the answers for the STRETCHING coaches.

The Tournament

Games and Activities

(20 minutes)

Blow the whistle to begin THE TOURNAMENT time. Choose from the following games and activities.

Penny Pennant

Set up a variety of games using pennies. The children can compete individually or by teams. Here are some ideas:

Penny Dash--Tape start and finish lines on a long, rectangular table. Place a child on each side of the table and give each a craft stick. On your signal, they each use the stick to push the penny down the table. Give the winner twice as many points as the loser, or play by elimination.

Penny Bowling--On a different table or area, place six foam cups upside down, in the form of a pyramid. The players try to slide the pennies and knock down the cups. Each player gets two tries. Keep score as in bowling.

Penny High Jump--Set up a bar six to eight inches high in the middle of the table. On one side of the bar put two strips of masking tape across the table, approximately ten inches apart. The goal is to flip a penny across the high bar and keep it from sliding out of the landing zone for points. You also can have different point zones, with tosses closer to the bar worth more points.

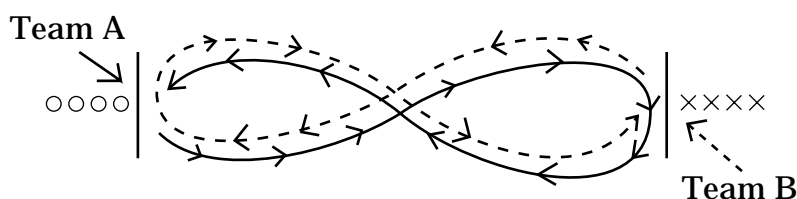
Penny Stack--Let the children see how many pennies they can stack on top of one another before the stack falls. Each player only gets one chance. Give a point for every penny successfully stacked.

Penny Spin--Guide several children to sit on the floor in a cleared area and spin pennies. The one whose penny spins the longest is the winner. This can be played in different rounds, with the winner from each round playing in a final.

When you finish each game, remind the children that they can give money to a church to help the church do its work.

Run for the Money

Divide the group into two relay teams. You will need a coin for each team. Set up a figure eight course (see the diagram below) and lead the teams to line up at opposite ends. On your signal, the first person on each team takes his coin and begins to push it around the figure eight course using only his nose. He may use his hands only to crawl on the floor.



Provide:

- A whistle

Provide:

- Pennies
- Masking tape
- Craft stick
- Foam cups

To Do:

- Follow directions as suggested for each game your kids play.

Provide:

- 2 cones
- 2 coins

The teams will be starting at opposite ends, so they will probably cross paths in the middle. One team may not interfere with the other's coin. As soon as the first person gets back to the starting point, the second person in line gets the coin and continues the race. The first team to have all its players finish is declared the winner.

When you finish this game, remind the children that they can give money to a church to help the church do its work.

Cool Down

Refreshments and Conclusion
(10 minutes)

Open up a candy store in which every piece of candy costs one or more cents. Give the children back their bags of money (*with ten pennies in each bag*). Explain that the children can buy candy or keep their pennies.

Conclude the meeting by reminding the children that God wants adults and children to gladly give a tithe to the church. The Bible says it should make church members happy for one-tenth of their money to be spent in helping other people find out about Jesus.

Provide:

- Hard candy

Meeting 3: Answers to Activity Pages

Grades 1–3

How Churches Help People

clothes

food

Bibles

I Can Give My Money

offering

Grades 4–6

Find the Offering

Pennies \$.05

Nickels \$.25

Dimes \$.30

Quarters \$2.00

Dollar Bills \$5.00

Total \$7.60

My Money Matters

Five loaves and two fish

Sara's tithe is \$.30

Andrew's tithe is \$.55

Maria's tithe is \$.43

Josh's tithe is \$.80